

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3 and 15-16 are amended. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicants gratefully appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 3-5, 8, 12-14 and 17-31 contain allowable subject matter.

The Office Action objects to the Drawings. The Drawings are amended by including element 1a in Figure 9 in order to overcome the objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the Drawings is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-2, 6-7, 9-11 and 15-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Kobayashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,446,525); and claims 1-2 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Inomata (U.S. Patent No. 6,081,676). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Patent Office indicates that claim 3 is allowable (Office Action, page 6, line 1). Moreover, independent claims 1-2 and 15-16 are amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 3. Accordingly, in view of the incorporation of allowable subject matter, independent claims 1-2 and 15-16, and their dependent claims, are now allowable. As such, withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-31 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Tarik M. Nabi
Registration No. 55,478

JAO:TMN/tje

Attachment:
Replacement Sheet (Fig. 9)

Date: September 14, 2005

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Fig. 9 and replaces the original sheet with Fig. 9.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet